

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0328

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FOR ANDREWS FROM MAGEE

E.O. 11652: GDS-3
TAGS: OGEN
SUBAQCT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. CHANCERY SITE. AS WE INDICATED IN SOFIA 0059 OF JAN 12, WE HAVE NOW BEEN OFFICIALLY ADVISED THAT NOT ONLY WILL IT NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR US TO ACQUIRE PRESENT CHANCERY, BUT WE MUST MOVE. ACCORDINGLY, FURTHER GUIDANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT -- WHICH WE AWAIT -- MUST TAKE AS ITS POINT OF DEPARTURE OUR NEED TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER BUILDING OR BUILDING SITE FOR A REPLACEMENT. WE HAVE TALKED WITH THE VICE MAYOR ABOUT THE CITY PLAN, AND OTHERS AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. UPSHOT OF THESE CONVERSATIONS IS TO CONFIRM THAT SIX MONTHS MENTIONED BY AMBASSADOR ILIEV (SOFIA 0059) NEED NOT BE TAKEN TOO SERIOUSLY. NONE THE LESS, WE MUST CONTINUE TO PRESS TO BE SHOWN POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES, AND FURTHER INDICATIONS OF WASHINGTON THINKING WILL BE WELCOME. WE MAY HAVE SOME LEVERAGE FOR A WHILE, GIVEN BULGARIAN INTEREST IN NEW CHANCERY IN WASHINGTON AND THEIR DESIRE FOR A PARTIAL OR COMPLETE TRADE-OFF ARRANGEMENT. PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED ON DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING BULGARIAN CHANCERY IN WASHINGTON. ALSO, PLEASE ADVISE IF FURTHER REGULAR REPORTING (E.G., ON CONVERSATIONS CONCERNING SOFIA CITY PLAN) WOULD BE HELPFUL.

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2. 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF SAN STEFANO. IT IS CLEAR FROM WHAT AMBASSADOR UROSEV TOLD US THAT THE YUGO-SLAVS WILL BOYCOTT THE CELEBRATIONS STARTING HERE MARCH 2, OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAN STEFANO TREATY SIGNING. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT THE BULGARIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WILL BE DOING, BUT YOU RECALL THAT

AMBASSADOR TOSHKOV TOLD YOU THAT THEY WERE PLANNING VARIOUS ACTIVITIES SUCH AS FILM SHOWINGS AND A PHOTO EXHIBIT, AND WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE. ON THE EVE OF TITO'S ARRIVAL, I IMAGINE THAT THE DEPT WOULD NOT WANT TO DO ANYTHING SPECIFICALLY FOR THE BULGARIANS WHICH MIGHT ANNOY THE YUGOSLAVS OR INTERFERE IN ANY WAY WITH THE VISIT. AT ANY RATE YOU WILL WANT TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT WHATEVER THE BULGARIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON MAY BE PLANNING.

3. POSSIBLE US VISIT BY PATRIARCH MAKSIM (SOFIA A-7, FEBRUARY 15). IN CONNECTION WITH PATRIARCH MAKSIM'S POSSIBLE VISIT TO AKRON, OHIO, THIS FALL TO CONSECRATE A NEW ORTHODOX CHURCH, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE FURTHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT STATE OF BULGARIAN CHURCH AFFAIRS IN THE US. IS THE VISIT LIKELY TO SERVE OUR INTERESTS BY BROADENING AND IMPROVING RELIGIOUS RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND BULGARIA? OR ARE THERE PROBLEMS WITHIN THE US ORTHODOX CHURCH COMMUNITY THAT WOULD BE EXACERBATED BY MAKSIM'S VISIT? WHAT STANCE SHOULD THE USG TAKE TOWARD THE VISIT? WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD HAVE SOME INQUIRIES MADE AND PROVIDE US WITH GUIDANCE.

4. ROMANIAN DESK SLOT. AS YOU REQUESTED, I SOUNDED OUT DAN SIMPSON ABOUT THE ROMANIAN DESK POSSIBILITY. CONFIDENTIAL

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DAN AS YOU KNOW WANTS BADLY TO REMAIN ABROAD AND PREFERS A POLITICAL SLOT IN WESTERN EUROPE FOR HIS NEXT ASSIGNMENT. IF THIS DOES NOT DEVELOP, HE WILL CONSIDER POSSIBILITIES IN AFRICA, WHERE HE HAS PREVIOUSLY SERVED AND WHERE HE IS SURE TO BE WELCOMED BACK. THIS IS ONLY HIS SECOND YEAR ABROAD FOLLOWING A FOUR-YEAR US ASSIGNMENT, AND HIS CHANCES FOR REMAINING OUT WOULD SEEM REASONABLY GOOD--ALTHOUGH HE HAS NOT HEARD ANYTHING VERY DEFINITE YET FROM PERSONNEL. HE IS QUITE INTERESTED IN HARRY GILMORE'S JOB IN MUNICH, AND I GATHER HE IS ONE OF SEVERAL BEING CONSIDERED. WHILE DAN IS INTERESTED IN SERVING AGAIN IN THE EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AREA, AND IN FACT WOULD BE WILLING TO RETURN TO THE EE AREA IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING AN ASSIGNMENT IN WESTERN EUROPE, HE DOES NOT EXPECT TO HAVE TO RETURN TO THE DEPARTMENT THIS SUMMER AND THUS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A LIVE CANDIDATE FOR THE ROMANIAN DESK SLOT.

5. IT WAS VERY GOOD TO SEE YOU, AND ALL OF US FOUND YOUR VISIT EXTREMELY USEFUL. HOPE WE WILL BE SEEING LEIDEL, GLENN, SCHMIDT AND LUERS HERE IN COMING MONTHS. GARTHOFF

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